

From: Matt Soccio
To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: Public Comment on Microsoft penatly

I am a Unix system administrator at Penn State University, and the political and economic ebb and flow of the computer industry has a deep effect on my job and how well I can do it. I am very concerned about the current Microsoft case and the impact that it will have on my ability to keep a heterogenous computer network running smoothly for years to come. Since 90% of my department uses Unix workstations, we currently have to jump through hoops in order to communicate with the countless number of people who use Microsoft products exclusively. Those professors who are amply funded, usually opt for a desk with two computers, one Unix, and one Microsoft. On the other hand, those people who are not amply funded, and cannot afford a high-powered Unix workstation, often choose a really fast Pentium class machine and use one of the free versions of Unix, with a great deal of sucess and satisfaction. When these Pentium-class machines break and are under warranty, I often have to push very hard on the manufacturer to support the hardware since there is no longer a Microsoft OS present. Lastly, I would like to point out that the recent security issues with Code Red, Nimda, Sircam, etc. have all been made possible because of loop holes in Microsoft code. I feel that one of the reasons that these incidents have had such a massive impact on the internet is because Microsoft guards its code so closely. If it is scrutinized by the computing community, it can be fixed before things reach such critical levels.

In conclusion, I feel that the current suggested penalties do not go far enough to break Microsoft's monopoly in the computer industry. I suggest the following:

- Break Microsoft's anti-competitive deals with PC manufacturers. Currently, the only real choice to a consumer when purchasing a PC, is which version of Microsoft's OS they want. I would like to be able to order a PC without an OS, or a freely available OS, and still get the hardware support that is offered by the big name PC manufacturers.
- Force Microsoft to make its binary formats available to the public. If this code was made available, files created on Microsoft-based machines would be able to be properly filtered so that they would be useable on other platforms.
- Force Microsoft to make the code for its networking protocols freely available. This will reduce the grief that is suffered by countless users who have to integrate combinations of Microsoft and non-Microsoft computers and servers on their networks.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Matt Soccio Manager, Network and Information Systems
Penn State University Dept. of Astronomy and Astrophysics
445 Davey Lab 814-863-4465
soccio@astro.psu.edu www.astro.psu.edu